

Perceived and Performed E-Health Literacy: Survey and Simulated Performance Test

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Abstract : Background: Connecting end-users to newly developed ICT technologies and channeling patients to new products requires an assessment of compatibility. End user's assessment is conveyed in the concept of eHealth literacy. The study examined the association between perceived and performed eHealth literacy (EHL) in a heterogeneous age sample in Israel. Methods: Participants included 100 Israeli adults (mean age 43, SD 13.9) who were first phone interviewed and then tested on a computer simulation of health-related Internet tasks. Performed, perceived and evaluated EHL were assessed. Levels of successful completion of tasks represented EHL performance and evaluated EHL included observed motivation, confidence, and amount of help provided. Results: The skills of accessing, understanding, appraising, applying, and generating new information had a decreasing successful completion rate with increase in complexity of the task. Generating new information, though highly correlated with all other skills, was least correlated with the other skills. Perceived and performed EHL were correlated ($r=.40$, $P=.001$), while facets of performance (i.e, digital literacy and EHL) were highly correlated ($r=.89$, $P<.001$). Participants low and high in performed EHL were significantly different: low performers were older, had attained less education, used the Internet for less time and perceived themselves as less healthy. They also encountered more difficulties, required more assistance, were less confident in their conduct and exhibited less motivation than high performers. Conclusions: The association in this age-heterogeneous sample was larger than in previous age-homogeneous samples. The moderate association between perceived and performed EHL indicates that the two are associated yet distinct, the latter requiring separate assessment. Features of future rapid performed EHL tools are discussed.

Keywords : eHealth, health literacy, performance, simulation

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